

313. *CIRCUS SPILONOTUS*, Kaup. (Swinhoe, Ibis, 1877, p. 144.)

A pair of these birds frequented the Susaki flats, Tokio, both in summer and winter, one of which was shot by Mr. C. Bland, December 1877; length 24 inches, wing 17.

Yezo, Tokio.

Yokohama, 28th December, 1877.

[We have received a box of some 50 skins of birds, sent in order to assist in determining some of the uncertain species in this list. We have placed them in the hands of Mr. Seebohm, who has kindly undertaken to prepare a report upon them.—EDD.]

XIX.—*Notes on the Avifauna of New Caledonia.* By EDGAR L. LAYARD, C.M.G., F.Z.S., &c., H.B.M. Consul, and E. LEOPOLD C. LAYARD, Vice-Consul at Noumea. *With Remarks* by the Rev. Canon TRISTRAM, F.R.S., C.M.Z.S., &c.

ON the 23rd of last month we had the pleasure of receiving our copy of 'The Ibis' for July last (4th series, vol. i. no. 3), putting us in possession of M. Marie's list of New-Caledonian birds, which the Editors have been kind enough to print for our information, and for which our hearty thanks are due. Surely we may now hope that we are in possession of all the literature respecting the birds of these islands. We have spared no pains or expense to acquire it; and as our list of birds differs somewhat from M. Marie's, we propose to make a few remarks on the latter, especially as we can add somewhat to its numbers, both by the enumeration of some species of our own acquiring, and by the description of several novelties which we have been fortunate enough to discover in an old collection belonging to the French colonial authorities, and destined for the Colonial Museum, now in process of building. This collection was made, as the labels show, by two French gentlemen, M. Guillaumont, Lieutenant d'infanterie de Marine, and M. Déplanche, in the island of Lifu, the central island of the Loyalty group. It lies about sixty miles from the nearest

point of New Caledonia; and as its avifauna closely resembles that of the larger island, it may be, with the rest of the Loyalties, safely included with it in a natural group. Unfortunately, exposure to dust, mites, and rats, in ill-fitting cases with broken panes of glass, has damaged most of the specimens beyond recovery, and the defective preparation of M. Guilançon's birds, both as to form and preservation, have especially marked them out for destruction. Still they afford a good foundation for a list of that island's birds, and the new species are so well marked that our wonder is they have escaped detection. They are said to have been in the cabinets so long that, in all probability, M. Marie must have seen them; and that they have been handled by some one who knew (or thought he knew) something about birds is evident from the fact that a specimen of an Australian *Platycercus* is marked in pencil "n'existe pas en Lifu:" and so also is a fine new *Merula*! but that, as will subsequently appear, is a mistake of the critic's!

We can but add that the novelties have so fired the zeal of L. L., that he has started off on a collecting-expedition to the spot, a fine opportunity offering. On his return we may perhaps have some further information to communicate.

The numbers used are those of M. Marie's list.

4. UROSPIZIAS APPROXIMANS (V. & H.).

Several specimens, in full adult plumage, occur in the Lifu collection. We have not met with it near Noumea.

5. UROSPIZIAS TORQUATA (Cuv.).

We have identified a Hawk, of which we have obtained several in immature garb, as belonging to this species; but we have never seen it in the full plumage described by Mr. Gould ('Handb. Birds of Austr.' p. 45).

[N.B. I have received a very fine adult specimen from Aneiteum, New Hebrides, procured by the Rev. J. Inglis; its first recorded occurrence in that group.—H. B. T.]

FALCO MELANOGENYS, Gould.

Two magnificent females of this fine Hawk, in full adult plumage, have been sent us from the "Ferme doméniale de

Yahoué," where they were shot by the superintendent; and two more have been seen by us, hovering over our house in pursuit of our broods of young chickens. Indeed, we skinned our second specimen with the gun by our side at the open window, fully expecting that the marauder would give us the chance of a shot! The first specimen weighed 2 lb, and the girth round the middle of the thigh was $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches. It had a lizard in its gullet. This is the first instance in which this species has been recorded from New Caledonia: it is a fine addition to its avifauna.

6. *CIRCUS WOLFI*, Gurney, P. Z. S. 1865, p. 823.

[The differences between the New-Caledonian species and *Circus maillardi*, from Joanna and Réunion, with which M. Marie identifies it, are pointed out by Mr. Gurney in his description of *C. wolfi*. It has not come under the notice of Mr. Layard.—H. B. T.]

7. *STRIX CASTANOPS*, Gould.

We have not met with this species; but in the collection, *though not from Lifu*, is a bird that bears evidence on its label as having been killed somewhere in New Caledonia, which accords in description and in all its measurements with *Strix novæ-hollandiæ*, Stephens, as given by Gould ('Handb. Birds of Austr.' i. p. 65); and as such we, without doubt, consider it. This is another addition to the list.

10. *COLLOCALIA LEUCOPYGIA*, Wall.

[Identified as *C. linchi*, Horsf., by M. Marie, but, I believe, erroneously.—H. B. T.]

Common throughout the islands, and, we think, at least partially, migratory. It was very common about Noumea in the cold weather, up to the end of September or beginning of October; since then it has disappeared. E. L. L. lately (9th November) visited Honailou, about halfway up the east coast. Here the species was found breeding in some caverns in limestone rocks. The nests were composed of fine rootlets, strands of *Casuarina*, dry grass, and feathers, cemented together into a hard compact mass, and firmly fastened to the sloping rock by the saliva of the birds.

Diam. $2'' \times 1'' 6'''$, depth $1''$. One single egg in each, pure white, rather truncated, axis $9'''$, diam. $6'''$.

The next species occurs in the Lifu collection, which does not contain the present one, though that does not prove its non-existence there.

COLLOCALIA UROPYGIALIS, G. R. G.

This is another of our additions to the avifauna. It frequents the forest and timbered country in preference to the open grass-lands or town (Noumea), though we have occasionally found it in the latter. E. L. L. observed it sparingly at Honailou in November.

[This is the common species of the New Hebrides.—H. B. T.]

COLLOCALIA, sp. inc. (*C. cinerea*, Gm.?).

Another species, entirely of a smoky brown, lighter beneath, without any white *uropygium*, was seen by E. L. L. near Noumea. It was probably identical with one brought by L. L. from Vate, or Sandwich Island, New Hebrides, which we identify with *C. cinerea* (Gm.).

[May not this be *C. spodiopygia*, Peal?—H. B. T.]

12. PLATYCERCUS CALEDONICUS (Gm.).

Is not this the female of *Nymphicus cornutus*? We have been unable to learn the existence of more than four species of Parrot in the island, of which we have seen specimens, viz. *Nymphicus cornutus*, *Cyanorhamphus saisseti*, *Psitteuteles diadema*, and *Trichoglossus massena*.

19. CHALCITES LUCIDUS (Gm.).

We have procured several of these small Shining Cuckoos, varying so much that we think we have got one, or more, of the species described by Mr. Gould; but this point must await comparison of ours with Australian specimens.

21. TURDUS XANTHOPUS, Forst.

This Blackbird is not uncommon in the neighbourhood of Noumea; but in the island of Lifu it is replaced, apparently, by a new and undescribed species, which we propose to dedicate to His Excellency the Governor, Admiral de Pritzbuher, to whom we owe the permission to pursue our researches into the avifauna of the island and its dependencies:—

Turdus pritzbueri, n. sp.

Male. Entire head, chin, throat, and upper part of chest very pale sepia; the whole of the rest of the body, above and below, very dark sepia, some of the feathers of the abdomen having pale sepia edges; bill, feet, and legs pale yellow.

Length 8", wing 3" 7"', tail 3" 3"', tarse 1" 2½"', bill 13" 11'.

Female (probably). Like the male, but the crown of the head and lower portion of chest brownish, and general colour of body not so dark.

Young bird. Top of head brown, spotted with rufous; back as in female, but faintly spotted with rufous; underparts deep warm rufous, spotted and irregularly marked with small broken bars of dark sepia.

This most interesting species is intermediate between *Merula tempesti*, Layard, from Taviuni, and *M. bicolor*, Layard, from Kandavu (Fiji). It approaches nearest to the first named, the colours being identical; but the Lifu bird has them much more "prononcé," the light sepia appearing almost white by contrast. On taking it to a resident of the Loyalty Islands, who is staying with my next-door neighbour (his brother-in-law), his wife exclaimed, "Oh! we eat lots of those, they are splendid 'gibier;'" and her servant, a Lifu man, standing by, added, "Him scrape on ground, all same fowl, we call him Wassasa."

23. *Petræca*, sp., Gray.

In his 'Catalogue of the Birds of Tropical Islands' (p. 15), Mr. Gray calls this *P. forsteri* (*Turdus minutus*, Forster) and gives the Isle of Pines as its habitat. We have not yet seen it.

24. *Gerygone flavolateralis* (G. R. Gr.).

Acanthiza flavo-lateralis, Gray, P. Z. S. 1859, p. 161.

[This bird, described by Mr. Gray, and enumerated by M. Marie as an *Acanthiza*, is a very typical *Gerygone* (see Ibis, 1877, p. 357).—H. B. T.]

27. *Rhipidura bulgeri*, Layard, Ibis, 1877, p. 361.

[Included by M. Marie as *R. albiscapa*, Gould, to which Australian bird it is closely allied, but distinct. I have com-

pared specimens sent by Mr. Layard, and also several New-Caledonian skins in the British Museum labelled *R. albiscapa*, and find that the distinctions already pointed out by Mr. Layard in 'The Ibis' hold good in all cases, the smaller size and the conspicuous white shafts of the rectrices discriminating the bird at a glance.—H. B. T.]

28. RHIPIDURA VERREAUXI, Marie.

Already recognized by the Editors of 'The Ibis' from a specimen I sent (see Ibis, 1877, p. 358).

29. EOPSALTRIA VARIEGATA, G. R. Gray.

30. EOPSALTRIA CALEDONICA (Gm.).

These are the same species, and rightly reunited by G. R. Gray in his catalogue (cf. 'Cruise of the 'Curaçoa,' Aves,' by G. R. Gray). We can only find two species here, this one and *E. flavigastra*, Verr. & Desm. They are very unlike in form and habits; *E. caledonica*, in form, resembles the Australian *E. australis*; whereas *E. flavigastra* resembles the Australian genus *Micræca* (*M. macroptera*), especially in the flattened broad bill and Robin-like figure. Its habits are also similar. We have no generic description by us, Gould's 'Handbook of the Birds of Australia' falling lamentably short in this respect; but we have specimens of the birds before named, procured by E. L. L. in Australia.

35. PACHYCEPHALA, sp.

We only know the three species of *Pachycephala* previously named by M. Marie from the neighbourhood of Noumea; but there is a fine new species in the Lifu collection, which, as they all so much resemble one another as to afford little or no distinguishing mark, we propose to name after our respected "Director of the Interior"*:—

PACHYCEPHALA LITTAYEI, sp. nov.

Male. Upper three fourths of the head jet-black; chin and throat, from lower mandible, pure white, succeeded by a broad

* We take this opportunity of correcting a typographical error (Ibis, 1877, pp. 356, 357): for "yellow-billed" (*Pachycephala xanthotræa*) read "yellow-bellied."

black collar, and then all the lower parts rich gamboge-yellow; upper parts yellowish green; wing- and tail-feathers greenish brown, the former edged exteriorly with the colour of the back. Length 7" 6"', wing 3" 10"', tail 3" 2"', tarse 13"', bill 12"/>.

Female unknown. This may be the species indicated by M. Marie.

CLYTORHYNCHUS PACHYCEPHALOIDES, D. G. Elliot.

Described from New Caledonia (P. Z. S. 1870, p. 243), but omitted from M. Marie's list published the same year. We have not seen it.

36. ARTAMUS MELALEUCUS, Forst.

Common generally; appears in the Lifu collection. E. L. L. procured an *Artamus* at Honailou which differs slightly from this species. It is large, the black of the throat does not apparently descend so low on the chest (this may be occasioned by the stuffing); and the back has a decided brownish tinge.

Can this be

ARTAMUS ARNOUXI, Bp.?

which is given in Gray's 'Birds of Tropical Islands' as probably from New Caledonia, but of which we have no description*.

37. CAMPEPHAGA CALEDONICA (Gm.).

It is generally distributed, feeds on locusts and large insects. We have a bird in the Lifu collection which instantly strikes one as much darker than those killed on the main island. It may be different; we await more specimens of L. L.'s collecting.

GAZZOLA TYPICA, Bp.

MM. Verreaux and Des Murs, in the 'Revue,' include this amongst other species not noted by M. Marie. We do not know it†.

* [This is an error of Mr. Gray. A supposed New-Caledonian species is named by Bonaparte (C. R. xxxviii. p. 538) *Ocypterus berardi*, and is concisely described as "noire!" Of *Artamus arnouxi* (named, and described as "*entièrement grise*," at the same time) the locality is not given.—EDD.]

† [Naturally enough; it is peculiar to Celebes!—EDD.]

43. *APLONIS STRIATA* (Gmel.), and Nos. 44, 45, 46, & 47.

We cannot help thinking that much confusion exists in the nomenclature of these Starlings. We can only find one species near Noumea, the male, female, and young of which exhibit shades of plumage that might entitle them to any of the designations *striata*, *nigroviridis*, *viridigrisea*, or *atro-nitens*!! We are inclined to think this species ought to bear the name of *Aplonis caledonica*, Bp., the description and measurements of which, as given in the 'Revue Zoologique,' tally very well, except that the closed wing is 10 (not 9) centims. We have found this species also in the Lifu collection, and another one considerably larger, viz. length 8" 6", wing 4" 6", tail 3" 1", tarse 1", bill 1". This latter we take to be *A. striata* (Gmel.) (= *Coracias pacifica*, Forst. p. 261), of which MM. Verreaux and Des Murs say in the 'Revue,' under the head of *A. viridigrisea*, G. R. Gray, "M. Gray rapproche cette espèce, avec doute, du *Coracias striata* de Gmelin, qui en serait la femelle." Its large size and robust bill at once distinguish it from the smaller species. It has also a *bluer* tinge (*A. caledonica* is *greenish*); there is also a browner tinge on the wing-primaries; and the undersides of the tail-feathers are *brown*, not black nor brown-black. The females are sooty, not black; and one presents a decidedly "striated" appearance on the undersides and head.

48. *LEPTORNIS AUBRYANUS*, Verr. & Des Murs.

While at Honailou E. L. L. heard of a bird answering to the description of this, but with the bare space about the eye *orange*, instead of *crimson* as figured in the 'Cruise of the Curaçoa,' and described in the 'Revue Zoologique' by MM. Verreaux and Des Murs. Now we know, from experience, that orange-coloured skin, in drying, often assumes a reddish or brown tint; and we are half inclined to fancy that, the figure and description (*loc. cit.*) having been taken from skins, a mistake was made. If this is not so, there must be two distinct species of *Leptornis* in New Caledonia; for E. L. L. closely questioned his *two* informants, of whom one had seen, *and stuffed*, two specimens, and the other, a botanist of some note, knew the bird well from the other side of the island.

Both said it was *very rare* (and so admitted to be by the natives), and only found in dense high forest, near the summits of the mountains. The first said the *orange* changed much after death, but that he sent away the specimens (one to M. Marie !) soon after preparing them, so could not tell what colour they would ultimately have assumed.

50. GLYCYPHILA MODESTA, G. R. Gray, and Nos. 51, 52, 53, & 54.

Here, again, we cannot help fancying some confusion exists, and that one species has done duty for several. We can only find *G. fasciata*, Forst., and what we identify as *G. chlorophæa* of the same author. This last is very common everywhere, and is clearly (if rightly identified) = to *G. caledonica*, Gray, = *G. modesta*, Gray ('Cruise of the Curaçoa,' pl. iv. fig. 1). E. L. L. obtained a *Glycyphila* at Honailou, which, at the first glance, he thought new to him, from its general ruddy tint; but a little examination showed that this colour was only derived from the ferruginous soil, the dust of which covered bush and flower and every thing else to such an extent that the bird's plumage was saturated with it by contact. It was only the common species !

56. MYZOMELA ERYTHROCEPHALA, Gould.

Not included by MM. Verreaux and Des Murs in their list; neither have we seen or heard of it; and the only species found near Noumea as yet by us has been No. 55, *M. sanguinolenta*; but in the Lifu collection are two birds which approach very nearly to Gould's description ('Handb. B. Austr.' vol. i. p. 556) of his *M. erythrocephala*. There are, however, marked differences, that, without actually comparing skins, induce us to think the bird is distinct, in which case we would suggest the name "*lifuens*" for it, as it is probably confined to that island, and any name alluding to its colour would equally apply to other species. Gould says "the male has the head and rump scarlet, the remainder of the plumage deep chocolate-brown." Our bird has the *whole back* scarlet, as well as the rump and head, and the latter has a black patch extending from the nostril to the eye. We should likewise characterize the rest of the plumage as *sooty black*, certainly not "chocolate-brown."

Total length (skin) 4" 3"', wing 2" 5"', tail 1" 10"', tarse 8"', bill 8"'.

[*Note.* In all the scarlet-backed species of *Myzomela* I find individuals, probably immature, in which the scarlet on the back is interrupted.—H. B. T.]

57. *ZOSTEROPS XANTHOCHROA*, G. R. Gray.

58. *ZOSTEROPS GRISEINOTA*, G. R. Gray.

Both these species are found round Noumea; but in Lifu they seem to be replaced by two entirely new species, the largest and smallest of the genus we have yet met with. We commence with the smallest, which we call

ZOSTEROPS MINUTA, sp. nov.

Upper parts all a bright yellow tinged with green, brightest on the front of the head; forehead as far as the eyes bright yellow; eyelids white, as usual, but with a narrow black line under the lower lid; chin, throat, chest, centre of belly, and under tail-coverts bright yellow; sides of belly and flanks buff; wing- and tail-feathers grey-brown, edged with the colour of the back. Length 3" 8"', wing 2" 1"', tail 1" 6"', tarse 8"', bill 6"'.

The other we designate

ZOSTEROPS INORNATA, sp. nov.

Head above dull green; back obscure sepia, faintly tinged with green; no white eyelid visible; wing- and tail-feathers same as the back, but externally edged with green; chin greyish; throat and chest dirty greenish; sides of chest sepia-brown; flanks inclining to buff; centre of belly pale sepia; bill above very dark brown, below pale. Length 5" 6"', wing 3" 1"', tail 2" 4"', tarse 11"', bill 11"', very strong and sharp-pointed.

The obscure colours of this bird render a description of it very difficult; but when lying in company with others from these islands it is most conspicuous, from its sombre livery and robust shape. The label bears the native name "Sinekato."

ZOSTEROPS MELANOPS, G. R. Gray, B. Trop. I. p. 15,

is omitted from M. Marie's list; we have not seen it. Mr. Gray (*loc. cit.*) states it is from the Loyalty Islands.

59. *ERYTHRURA PSITTACEA* (Gmel.).

Seems generally distributed, and is a favourite cage-bird. It occurs in the Lifu collection; but there is likewise another species from that island which seems to us quite new; unfortunately it is one of M. Guillanton's specimens, and consequently in very bad order; but enough remains to show that it is very distinct. We name it

ERYTHRURA CYANEIFRONS, sp. nov.

General colour above and below green, rather lighter than that of the preceding; rump, upper tail-coverts, and tail-feathers dull scarlet, not nearly so bright as in the preceding; two central feathers elongated; forehead (and cheeks apparently) bright blue. There seems to be a narrow black line between the bill and the blue of the forehead, and a black patch over the lores; but the malpreparation of the specimen prevents an accurate description. Bill black; legs as in the preceding. Length 5", wing 2" 3"', tail 2" 3"', tarse 7"', bill 6".

This is not the female of the preceding, of which we have shot several; unfortunately the sex is not noted (none of the specimens in the collection are sexed); but it looks like a male in full plumage. It is a very interesting addition to the avifauna; and if L. L. succeeds in bringing a fair series of this, and of the others here indicated, we shall be able to correct any errors into which we may have fallen, or to add to our descriptions if necessary.

MACROPYGIA ALBICEPS (Temm.).

Mr. Gray ('Birds of Tropical Islands,' p. 43) includes this Pigeon among the birds of New Caledonia. We have not yet seen it; nor is it in M. Marie's list or in the 'Rev. Zool.'

[I can find no authority for including this bird in the fauna of New Caledonia. It seems to have crept into Gray's list in error.—H. B. T.]

63. *CARPOPHAGA PACIFICA* (Gm.).

Quoted by M. Marie as *C. ænea*, G. R. G. We have a suspicion that there are several varieties, if not species, confounded under this title. A series from different islands is needed to show this.

60. *PTILOPUS GREYI*, G. R. Gray.

This little Dove is getting very scarce in New Caledonia proper; it occurs (several specimens) in the Lifu collection, and, we are told, is not uncommon in the Isle of Pines. We have it abundantly from the New Hebrides; and it is apparently the most widely distributed of all the *Ptilopi*.

We might here mention that, having lately received Cassin's 'Ornithology of the U.S. Expl. Exped.' with the Atlas of plates, we are convinced that, misled by Drs. Finsch and Hartlaub's 'Ornithologie,' we have assigned wrong habitats to *P. fasciatus*, Peale, and *P. apicalis*. The former is evidently the bird figured in the folio Atlas, pl. 31, and described from Samoa by Peale, whose not very exhaustive description is quoted entire.

A glimpse at the plate is quite sufficient to show the bird indicated. The patch of colour on the belly, well described as "purple," the dark orange-yellow of the patch following it, and of the under tail-coverts, and, above all, the bright yellow terminations of the tail-feathers, are the chief characteristics of the Samoan bird, and of it alone out of the *Ptilopi* found in the three groups, Navigators', Friendly, and Fiji Islands; and whatever names the others must bear, the Samoan bird is clearly entitled to that of *P. fasciatus*, Peale. Each of the three groups of islands named possesses but *one species* of these green and grey (cinereous) Doves; and in determining a species special attention should be given to the locality which furnished the typical specimen from which the original description was taken.

[On comparing a series from the different groups, and referring to the original descriptions, it seems clear that *P. apicalis*, Bp., must sink to a synonym of *P. porphyraceus*. Were it not for the words "rectricibus apice flavis," the diagnosis would suit *P. fasciatus* almost as well. The Samoan species is distinguishable at a glance; but the *Ptilinopi* of Tonga and Fiji appear to me barely, if at all, separable, though in Fijian specimens the green of the neck and shoulders seems less suffused with grey than in those from Tonga.—H. B. T.]

66. TURNIX VARIA, Temm.

We have heard of an indigenous Quail on some of the grassy uplands, but have not yet seen a specimen. *T. varia* has been several times introduced from Australia; M. Marie may have come across one of these imported birds, and hence included it in his list. Quails of some species were brought from Réunion in 1862, in the French frigate 'Ibis,' and turned out near Noumea. M. Jouan describes a Quail, "la même espèce qu'en Australie," as found on the uplands.

68. ESACUS MAGNIROSTRIS, Temm.

We have not yet heard of this species; neither is it included in the 'Revue.'

69. CHARADRIUS, sp. ? G. R. Gray.

As regards this uncertain species we only know of

+70. CHARADRIUS FULVUS, Gm.

Included as *C. xanthocheilus*, Wagl., by M. Marie. This L. L. found breeding on the islets off Anservata, close to Noumea.

+72. TOTANUS INCANUS (Gm.).

We have just (20th December, 1877) obtained a single specimen (male) of this bird (the only one we have seen), shot by L. L. on the above-named islets. It differs somewhat from our Fijian-killed birds in having the bill shorter and thicker, and in having the feet and legs *ochraceous*, instead of *green*. According to Drs. Finsch and Hartlaub, and Cassin (U.S. Expl. Exped.), *T. incanus* (Gmel.) = *Gambetta pulverulentus*, Müller (Gould's Handb. B. Austr. vol. ii. p. 268). Gould (*loc. cit.*) says, "base of the lower mandible *scarlet*!" legs and feet "hyacinth-red" (Cassin does not notice the colour of these parts). We have never seen any thing like this coloration in the numerous specimens killed by us. Are there not several species mixed up under the numerous synonyms quoted by Drs. Finsch and Hartlaub?

+73. LIMOSA UROPYGIALIS, Gould.

+74. LIMOSA NOVÆ-ZEALANDIÆ, G. R. Gray.

Drs. Finsch and Hartlaub, in their 'Polynesian Orni-

thology,' speak of these as one species. We have only found, both here and in Fiji, what we take to be *L. uropygialis*, Gould.

NUMENIUS UROPYGIALIS, Gould.

Mr. Gray (B. Trop. Isl., p. 48) gives *N. tahitiensis* (Gould) as the New-Caledonian bird; and we have likewise so identified it. Our bird is identical with the Fijian, which we now think we have wrongly called *N. femoralis*. We hope shortly to transmit specimens to England for the inspection of our friend Mr. Harting.

77. HYPOTÆNIDIA PHILIPPENSIS, Gm.

Very abundant in the small island of Huon, to the north of New Caledonia. They rarely can be forced to take wing, and are caught in the grass by dogs. We have received several specimens alive.

78. ORTYGOMETRA TABUENSIS (Gmel.).

Porzana immaculata, Gould.

We have not yet seen it from this island.

79. ORTYGOMETRA CINEREA, Vieill., cited by M. Marie as *Zapornia leucophrys*, Gould, appears in the Lifu collection. A small Rail is said to be very abundant on the islands of Huon and Surprise, in addition to No. 77, which is there called a "Quail" or "Partridge"! It is probably this species, which is said (Gray's 'Birds of Tropical Islands') to be found also on the island of Tanna, the large southern island of the New-Hebrides group, which is distant only a few hours' sail.

81. PORPHYRIO MELANONOTUS, Temm.

82. PORPHYRIO BELLUS, Gould.

The only "Blue Gallinule" we have seen from here is undoubtedly identical with the species spread over the whole of the Fijian, Samoan, Tongan, and New-Hebridean groups, and which we cannot look upon as other than *P. vitiensis*, Peale. We pay no attention to difference of size, when unaccompanied by other distinctions; the scarcity or plenty of food may well account for discrepancies in this respect—"suitability of environment," in fact.

P. bellus, Gould, we have not got for comparison; but our collection contains *P. melanonotus*, and we have found nothing like it here.

BUTORIDES JAVANICUS (Horsf.).

If we mistake not, Messrs. Finsch and Hartlaub, in their 'Ornithologie' (p. 210), include this species as an inhabitant of New Caledonia.

+87. *CESTRELLATA ROSTRATA*, Peale.

This is the common Petrel of the country. We know of several breeding-places, and have obtained young birds in various stages of plumage. Our list of these birds also includes

+*CESTRELLATA GAVIA* (Forst.) (Gray, B. Trop. Is. p. 56), and

+*PROCELLARIA CÆRULEA*, Gmel.,

both of which we believe we have seen close to the island in our voyages to Australia.

+*PUFFINUS BREVICAUDUS*, Brandt; Gould, Handb. B. Austr. vol. ii. p. 459.

We have to thank Capt. North, of the schooner 'Effie Muckle,' running in the coasting trade here, for the addition of this and the following species to our avifauna. We only wish we could induce others "who go down to the sea in ships, and occupy their business in great waters," to interest themselves in our pursuit; they little know the interest they would derive from it, and how much they might benefit science.

The specimen noted was caught on the water at Honailou by some fishermen, and brought to us in alcohol (rum),—a male, in fine plumage. We suspect this is one of the Petrels that breed in holes on Huon Island.

+*THALASSIDROMA WILSONI*, Keys. et Blas.

Of this a pair were seen, and one shot (and brought to us in alcohol by Capt. North), in the Wodin Pass, at the south end of the island, on the 21st of June last. A female in fine plumage.

88. *LARUS NOVÆ-HOLLANDIÆ*, Steph.

If this bird is rightly identified, it breeds on Huon Island;

a young bird from there is now running about within a few feet of us. But our birds have never more than *two* primaries with the white speculum on them. Is this a constant characteristic of *L. gouldi*, Bp.? We have seen no other Gull here, though M. Jouan mentions a larger species in his 'Notes.' Length 52 centims.

† 89. *STERNA GRACILIS*, Gould.

A specimen in the museum (locality unknown), marked "jeune femelle, mai," is in beautiful young plumage. We have little doubt that it was killed in the island, and probably was bred here. Our list of Terns includes, over and above those named by M. Marie,

STERNA BERGII (OR *VELOX*), Licht.,
which we find not uncommon,

STERNULA NEREIS, Gould.,
which L. L. found breeding on some rocky islets off Anseвата,

† *ANOUS STOLIDUS*, L.,
teste Finsch & Hartlaub (Orn. p. 327), and

— *GYGIS ALBA*, Sparrm.,
Finsch & Hartlaub (Orn. p. 233).

† 96. *PHAETON RUBRICAUDA* (Gm.)
breeds on Huon Island, as does

† 98. *TACHYPETES MINOR* (Gm.),
a specimen we have agreeing entirely with the bird we thus identified in Fiji.

The Huon Islands have only just been opened up as guano-dépôt sites. We hear of various birds breeding there—two Rails, two Phaetons, two Frigate-birds, one (if not two) Boobies, two Terns, and two "Mutton-birds," "that burrow into the soil under the rocks."

The veteran zoologist Père Montrouzier believes the Frigate-bird to be new; and his description of it was read before the "Société de Géographie" in Paris on the 6th December, 1876, in a communication entled "Note d'histoire naturelle sur les îles Huon et Surprise, par le R. P. Mont-

rouziers,' reprinted in the 'Moniteur de la N. Calédonie,' May 1877. He gives a list of the birds, reptiles, shells, insects, and plants observed by him. Of the first, he notices *Sula bassana*, *Tachypetes aquilus*, *Phaeton candidus*, *P. phænicurus*, *Rallus pectoralis* ("dont les paillettes sont plutôt fauves que blanches, et dont la chair est d'un goût détestable"!!), "un Sterne noir-brun à calotte blanche," and the new (?) Frigate-bird, which he designates *Tachypetes chambeyroni*, and thus describes:—

"Taille de la Frégate commune, d'un noir-brun, plumes au-dessus du dos longues, irisées, à reflets métalliques; un volumineux jabot placé sous la gorge, pouvant se gonfler, d'un rouge de sang, garni à la base de quelques plumes rares, courtes, distantes, et de tuberculosités analogues à celle de la tête du Dindon."

[I have compared specimens from nearly every group, and feel satisfied that they must all be referred to *T. minor*, and that no third species of *Tachypetes* exists.—H. B. T.]

101. ANAS SUPERCILIOSA, Gm.

This is the only Duck we have yet seen; but Capt. Hutton, in his 'Catalogue of the Birds of New Zealand,' p. 36, adds to our avifauna

QUERQUEDULA GIBBERIFRONS, Müller.

This makes a total of twenty-three additions to M. Marie's list; and if we eliminate Nos. 35 and 69, to which no titles are given, we shall have a total of 127 species in our supposed avifauna—a number considerably in excess of that of Fiji as at present known to us.

106. PODICEPS GULARIS, Gould.

M. Jouan describes a Dabchick (No. 53 of his 'Notes') which answers well to the Australian bird. One was shot while E. L. L. was at Honailou, but, unfortunately, was not shown to him till it appeared on the dinner-table! Its size answered to *P. gularis*, which we have from Australia; but not a feather could be found for identification.

An analysis of the genera of birds found in New Caledonia, Fiji, and Australia, gives us the following results:—

Genera common to New Caledonia and Australia, but not found in Fiji, 27 (this includes Waders and Sea-birds).

Genera found in New Caledonia and Fiji not found in Australia, 2.

Genera common to all three countries, 29.

Genera found only in New Caledonia, 6.

Genera found only in Fiji, 4.

Species common to New Caledonia and Australia, but not found in Fiji, 33.

Species common to Fiji and Australia, but not to New Caledonia, not one!

From this analysis it is evident that New Caledonia is essentially Australian. We have not materials enough yet to institute a proper comparison with the avifauna of the New Hebrides and other islands to the northward and eastward; but what little we have shows that it differs considerably from ours, and that this is probably the most easterly limit of the Australian avifauna.

XX.—*Notes on some Birds collected or observed by Mr. E. Leopold C. Layard in the New Hebrides.* By Messrs. E. L. LAYARD, and E. L. C. LAYARD. *With Remarks* by the Rev. Canon TRISTRAM, F.R.S. &c.

THE islands visited by Mr. Leopold Layard during his cruise through the New-Hebrides group consisted of Erromango, Vate, Ambrym, St. Bartholomew, Santo, Api, and Mallicolo. The major part of the collection was formed on Vate (or Sandwich Island), in the neighbourhood of Havanna Harbour, the time spent on some of the others having been too limited to do more than note such birds as were seen and fully recognized. The number of species of which examples were collected amounts to twenty-five, those seen and noted to thirty-eight. In the tabulated list appended the numerals indicate the numbers procured, the asterisk that the species was observed but not procured. •